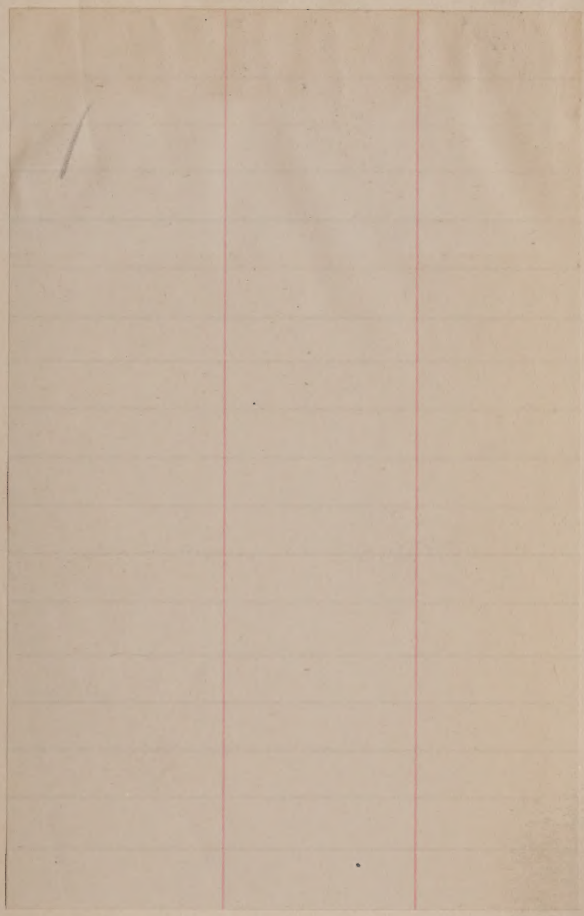
BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 08632 221 9

SHELF

No. 7541.339



THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LAST PROMISE OF JESUS CHRIST TO CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES.

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED AT SPRINGFIELD, MAY 10, 1826,

AT THE

ORDINATION

OF THE

REV. RUFUS ANDERSON,

AS AN EVANGELIST;

7541.339

AND OF THE

REV. MESSRS. JOSIAH BREWER, ELI SMITH, CYRUS STONE, AND JEREMIAH STOW,

TO THE HIGH AND SACRED OFFICE OF

CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES.

BY WARREN FAY,

Pastor of the First Church in Charlestown, Mass.

Published by order of the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY CROCKER & BREWSTER,

No. 50, CORNHILL.

1826.

from 7440-15
114,575
April 29, 1871

SERMON.

7541.339

MATTHEW xxviii, 20.

LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAY, EVEN TO THE END OF THE WORLD.

THIS promise was made by Jesus Christ to his disciples. It was made in circumstances deeply interesting. He had finished his course of instructions, his labors, and his sufferings. He had died for the sins of the world, and risen, and was about to ascend up to glory. He was now to make provision for evangelising the nations, and for the edification of his church in all ages to the end of time. And he gave the following commission to his disciples, and thus clothed them with the Christian ministry; "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;—Teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you." And he annexed the precious promise;—"Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world."

This animating promise we believe to have been made to all the faithful ministers of the gospel, and missionaries of the cross, to the end of time. For if the promise annexed to the commission given to the

primitive disciples ceased with the Jewish dispensation, then did the commission also expire with it.—But this would prove too much;—for this is the broad commission, under which the professed ministers of the gospel universally claim their authority to preach, and to administer baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Though the commission and the promise were addressed, as they fell from the lips of the Saviour, directly to the eleven disciples, yet they were addressed through them to Christian ministers and missionaries in all coming ages. This was the method in which the great Head of the Church instituted the sacramental supper. He said to his *disciples*, "This do in remembrance of me." But who will say the Lord's supper was to be celebrated *only* by the disciples, to whom he spake, or only in that age? He meant unquestionably to bind the *church* to the observance of the supper *to the end of time*. "Jesus said to *his disciples*, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." But who will say he meant to inculcate self-denial on his disciples only?—Again Jesus said to *his disciples*, "If thy hand, or thy foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee." But who will say this injunction was binding only on those to whom he spake? He likewise said to *his disciples*, "If thy brother trespass against thee, go tell him his fault between thee and him alone." And has not this justly been considered a law in the kingdom of Jesus Christ from that day to this; and a standing law to the end of the world? All these precepts were addressed to the very same persons, to whom the prom-

ise was made, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world;"—and the promise is as sure to Christian ministers and missionaries to the end of time, as the precepts recited are binding to the end of time.

It will be my object, on the present occasion, to illustrate *the importance of this promise to Christian Missionaries.*

This promise will be seen to be of great importance to the missionary of the cross,

1. As it respects HIS QUALIFICATIONS.

The christian missionary enters upon a peculiar work; a work arduous, self-denying, and responsible; and consequently he needs peculiar and high qualifications. He must go forth ordinarily into nations and tribes entirely heathen; where all the ignorance of paganism is to be enlightened, all the prejudices of paganism to be removed, and all the superstitions and idolatries of paganism to be done away.

He needs in such circumstances high *mental* qualifications. He will find full scope for the vigorous exercise of a clear understanding, a sound judgment, a ready invention, a retentive memory,—a well disciplined and well cultivated mind. He needs a facility in acquiring languages, that he may be able to translate the Scriptures into the vernacular tongue of those to whom he is sent; a most important and responsible part of his labors; and to tell the heathen "in their own language the wonderful works of God." He must establish schools, that he may teach them to read the Scriptures.

It will be found in most pagan nations, that there is little sound learning, and little more knowledge of the

useful sciences, than of the gospel of Jesus Christ.— The heathen are generally as degraded in ignorance, as besotted in vice, and destitute both of knowledge and morality. As an important auxiliary, the Christian missionary must cast around him the rays of knowledge, and promote useful civil and literary institutions. He is encompassed with mental darkness as intense as midnight; and he must be a radiating point; he must electrify by his own energy minds long torpid and palsied; he must be able to impart useful knowledge on almost all subjects; and he must excite ignorant, sensual pagans to think and reflect, to read and meditate. And who does not perceive, that for such a work he needs high mental qualifications; and who will affirm, that he, who is not qualified to move and direct minds somewhat enlightened, and accustomed to reflection at home, may better be sent forth to dissipate the thickest mental darkness, and to arouse and enlighten minds, never accustomed to thought and reflection? Who will say, that the dim taper, scarcely sufficient to guide the steps at twilight, would be a sufficient guide in exploring all the recesses of a dark cavern, where no ray of light from abroad ever entered? But the mistaken opinion that men of less than ordinary mental energy and acquisitions may well be employed as missionaries to the heathen, we trust is vanishing from the public mind, like the spectres of the night; and it begins to be generally seen, that high mental qualifications are necessary to the extensive influence and useful operations of the Christian missionary.

He needs also *physical* strength and vigor. His exposures are many and severe; his labors constant and arduous; his privations various and sometimes exhausting;—and bodily indisposition may either wholly interrupt his labors, or weigh down his spirits, and palsy his efforts, and very much limit his usefulness. To go forth to his work with the fairest prospect of accomplishing his great enterprise, he needs a sound mind in a sound body; a capacity to labor diligently, to endure all things, and to exert a resuscitating influence upon the stupid, inactive multitude around him. And who can impart and continue these qualifications, but he who gave the precious promise, "Lo, I am with you *alway*, even to the end of the world;—he who giveth to man understanding and knowledge;" who said to the first Christian missionaries, "Behold I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you." What hope would the missionary have of attaining those high intellectual qualifications so desirable; or of possessing that health and vigor necessary to sustain the abundance of his labors and the severity of his hardships, unless he could confide in the promise and presence of the Creator and Preserver of both body and mind? Confiding in this promise, he is not dismayed, though so many, who have gone far hence to the Gentiles, have died early, and rested from their labors.

That the Christian missionary needs high *moral* qualifications all will admit. He must not only have been renewed in the temper of his mind, and have renounced the supreme love of the world for the love of

Christ, but he needs great devotion to his service, glowing benevolence to the souls of men, elevated views, singleness of purpose, and strong faith. The chief Apostle to the Gentiles was not prepared for his labors as a missionary of the cross, until he was humbled in the dust, renewed by divine grace, and fired with unquenchable benevolence to the souls of men. When he was only a moralist, a formalist, and a Pharisee, he opposed the cause of missions and the spread and influence of Christianity; and with malignity attempted to imprison, or put to death all, who espoused this heavenly cause. "When it pleased God," says this great Apostle to the Gentiles, "who called me by his grace,—to reveal his Son in me, *that I might preach him among the heathen*, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." Then it was, and not till then, that he was prepared to enter upon this sacred and self-denying enterprise.

The Christian missionary not only needs genuine piety to form the resolution of spending his life in toils and sacrifices for the salvation of the Gentile world; but he needs increasing, deep-toned piety, to execute such a resolution. He needs a heavenly temper, an ardor of benevolence, possessed by few, to give himself away by solemn ordination in the presence of God, angels, and men, to "go out from his country, and his kindred, and his father's house;"—to turn his back upon every thing he holds dear on earth, and commit himself to the mercy of the waves, or of more dangerous men. What a test of the piety of Martyn, when he tore himself away for the last time from his dearest friends, his much loved country, and all his

precious privileges;—a trial of his piety, which not only evinced that it was real, but that it must be increased for future exigencies, and, if possible, for greater trials?

The missionary needs increasing piety and more ardent benevolence, as he reaches a pagan shore, and enters a region of spiritual gloom, where the moral darkness is visible, and may be felt; where such a moral renovation is to be effected, and such a mighty work is to be accomplished, as would lead men of only ordinary attainments to sit down in despair. When he begins to sustain all the burden and toil of learning new and difficult languages, perhaps almost without books and instructors; and to learn them so, that he can read not only, but speak them fluently and impressively, and make them the vehicle of thought to minds the most benighted, he is in danger of fainting under the pressure of the task. And when he has sustained all this toil, and, after years of diligent application, is prepared to preach the gospel in the languages of those, to whom he is sent, their stupidity, their ignorance, their cavilling, their opposition, their determined adherence to their debasing superstitions and horrid idolatries, are suited to produce deep despondency, and to relax, if not interrupt, his efforts. Amidst such toils and such prospects, how much does he need elevated and glowing piety;—a zeal, which nothing can damp; an ardor, which nothing can quench; an aim, which no obstacles can reach; a benevolence, which nothing can withstand.

Contemplate the missionary in any probable circumstances of his life, and how much does he need high

moral qualifications; how much does he need that simplicity and godly sincerity, that spirituality of affection, that entire devotedness to the service of God, which none, but he who commissioned the first Christian missionaries, and made the promise contained in the text, can impart. How could he hope to possess an ardor of piety, a strength of faith, a spirit of self-denial, a crucifixion to the world, indispensable to the labors and trials and exigencies of his future course, did he not hear the Lord of missions say, "My grace is sufficient for thee;—my strength shall be made perfect in thy weakness;—and as thy day is so shall thy strength be."

Whatever be the talents or attainments of the Christian missionary, he will feel that his intellectual and moral qualifications are below the dignity and magnitude and sacredness of his work, not only when he devotes himself to it, but when he enters upon it, and prosecutes it with all the ardor of his soul. But his encouragement is, that the Saviour will be always present with him to invigorate his mind, to succeed him in his studies, to defend him from "the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and from the destruction that wasteth at noon day," as long as his work is unfinished, to strengthen his faith and animate his zeal and increase his graces, and to furnish him continually with higher endowments for his sacred office.

The promise in the text will be seen to be of great importance to the Christian missionary,

II. As it respects his CIRCUMSTANCES.

And here I can consider only his trials, his temptations, and his discouragements.

His *trials* commence as soon as he seriously turns his attention to the subject of missions. As he contemplates the obligations of the Christian world to cause the gospel to be preached to all nations, he perceives that some must become missionaries, or this can not be done. He perceives, that if it be the duty of the churches to send the gospel into all the world, it must be the duty of some to go forth, and proclaim it. The question arises, "Is it not my duty to go far hence, and bear the unsearchable riches of Christ to the heathen?" This is a question of great importance, both to himself and to the cause of missions; and as it comes home to his own bosom, and presses upon his conscience, its importance rises in his view, until he is ready to sink under the pressure. To decide this question satisfactorily in the fear of God, he must examine his own qualifications; he must consider for what sphere of labor he is best fitted, where he is most needed, and can probably accomplish the most for his Lord and Master. He must watch the indications of providence, and inquire diligently at a throne of grace, "Lord, what wilt *thou* have me to do?" And after he has done all this, in coming to the final decision he may have perplexing doubts, great inward conflicts, and severe trials. And these trials are unknown to the world, and little considered even by Christians.

Having taken up the resolution to devote himself to the service of God among the heathen, he may find it painfully difficult to satisfy his friends, or be con-

strained to act in opposition to the feelings of those, whom he esteems and loves. Going forth to his work, he must tear himself from his choicest earthly connexions, from all the endearments of the domestic circle, and "sacred home;" he must sunder the thousand tender ties, which bind him to the place of his nativity, the scenes and companions of his youth; he must abandon the seats of science, the circles for prayer, the institutions of Christian benevolence, and the church, the beloved church, in the bosom of which he has vowed unto the Lord, and in all the tenderness of Christian sympathy has commemorated his dying love.

And while this final parting seems so much like the separation of death, the missionary does not, like the dying saint, tear himself away to enter immediately into the joy of his Lord, where all his trials are ended, where all is fruition, all is bliss! No;—he passes through these painful scenes, that he may enter upon others, if possible, still more painful. Leaving the land of his fathers, with all its ten thousand blessings, he plants himself amidst idolaters, ignorant, degraded, barbarous. Here he must take up his abode amidst crime, and misery, and wretchedness, beyond the power of language to describe.

Thus situated, he must not only sustain the privation of almost every thing he held dear in his native land, and in the bosom of earthly friends;—but he may at some seasons be destitute of the conveniencies, and even of the comforts of life, and suffer from hunger and want, and have not where to lay his head.—His life may be endangered from the ferocity of wild beasts, or from more ferocious man. He may suffer

from an insalubrious climate. He may be severely tried with the ignorance, the obstinacy, the cruelty, the abominations of the heathen around him, and be "grieved at the transgressors, and his righteous soul may be vexed from day to day with their ungodly deeds." He may be tried with the darkness of the prospect before him, and with the apparent inefficiency of his labors.

He may be tried, and severely tried, with the languor and covetousness of the churches at home; and while *he* has forsaken all, and, without any prospect or desire of earthly remuneration, is wearing out his life as their messenger to the heathen, he may cast his eye back upon the churches he has left, and see them hoarding up their treasures, living in luxury and splendor, sharing all the supposed innocent enjoyments of earth, and neglecting to furnish him with the means of spreading out his labors most extensively and usefully, or delaying to send out to his relief more laborers. And O how trying must it be to the missionary, sent forth by the churches, with their sacred pledge, that they will furnish him all necessary and possible assistance by their charities and prayers, to feel himself, amidst all his toils and privations and sorrows in a land of pagan darkness, in any measure forgotten or neglected by the churches, which sent him forth? If he is ever constrained to feel this, surely he has no other hope from earth, and can find support only in the promised presence and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.—But of these churches we are persuaded better things, though we thus speak. This cruel, this almost insupportable trial they will not impose on these.

nor any of the beloved missionaries, they have sent forth to the heathen. While they forsake all that is flattering in this world, that they may minister in spiritual things to the wretched and the perishing, the churches at home will think it a small matter to minister to them in temporal things.

The Christian missionary may be severely tried by the loss of friends. All indeed are exposed to this trial. But those in a Christian land, if called to sustain bereavements, are still in the midst of surviving friends; and those who remain, may do much to repair the loss of those, who are removed. The Christian missionary on the contrary, if deprived of his bosom companion, has no parents, no brethren and sisters, and often no sympathising friend to assuage his griefs, and into whose bosom he can pour his sorrows. He is among strangers and heathen, who have no consolation to communicate to his bleeding heart. Like the much lamented Fisk, when Parsons sunk into the arms of death, he may be left solitary and alone; and in the midst of the greatest multitude of human beings, he may feel himself in the deepest solitude and loneliness. Without proceeding to mention the many more multiplied trials of the Christian missionary,—how could all these be sustained without the promised presence and support and consolation of the Great Head of the Church? Would it not be presumption and temerity for a missionary to go forth, expecting to endure to the end, under all these complicated and heavy trials, without confiding in the promise of Jesus Christ, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end

of the world?" Could even Gabriel sustain all these trials unsupported?

The promise of Jesus Christ is important to the Christian missionary under the *peculiar temptations* which assail him. Every private Christian, it is admitted, must endure sharp temptations; and every Christian minister must sustain severe spiritual conflicts. But the temptations which assail the missionary of the cross, are often peculiar and powerful. He may be tempted, as soon as he resolves to spend his life in labors of love among the heathen, to conclude that he is not called, or is not qualified to engage in such an enterprise; and when he goes forth to its trials and toils, that he has run before he was sent. He may be tempted to believe, that his motives have been wholly defective, and that God will not bless his labors, nor accept his sacrifices. He may be tempted to employ his advantages, and the eminence his office gives him in the view of the Christian world, to display his talents and acquisitions, and to erect a monument of his own fame. After the novelty of his enterprise has passed away, he may be tempted to slothfulness in his exhausting labors, and to an undue and unjustifiable compliance with the customs of the heathen. He may also be tempted to court popular favor, and with the delusive hope of augmenting his influence, and becoming more useful hereafter, he may neutralize his labors, and injure his character, and destroy all prospect of achieving any thing great or good. He may even be tempted to turn away from the incessant toils of his office, to descend from the dignity of his character, and to yield to the vices,

which surround him. We have reason to bless the Great Head of the church, that this has been so seldom found in the history of modern missions.

The missionary in the midst of numerous and powerful temptations, it should be remembered, has not a host of Christian friends to fortify his mind, to strengthen his resolutions, and to stay up his hands; and where can he look for succor and defence, but to the Lord of missions? How could he ever hope to overcome all the numerous and powerful temptations which assail him, without the promised presence and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ? Take away this precious promise, and must not the missionary, in view of the unavoidable temptations which assail him, and meet his eye in prospect, sit down in despair?

Consider also the importance of the promise of Jesus Christ to the missionary of the cross amidst his *discouragements*. The Christian minister finds many painful discouragements, when planted in the best cultivated field at home. How much greater the discouragements of the missionary in the midst of a thick forest perhaps, or what is more disheartening, a moral desert. He has every thing to do; nor can he enter directly upon his great work of preaching the gospel to the heathen. He finds almost insurmountable difficulties in learning their languages; perhaps reduced to no grammatical rules, perhaps never written. When he attempts the exhibition of divine truth, instead of preaching the gospel in the style of a refined taste, and in the language of a commanding eloquence, he must make known its

truths through the slow and dull medium of an interpreter, or in broken accents, and with a stammering tongue.

He finds discouragements, also, in obtaining a comfortable subsistence, and in conducting his temporal concerns so as not to impede his pursuit of higher objects. Deprived of all his former Christian privileges, he finds no small discouragement in the slow progress he makes in piety. And here I cannot omit to introduce a pathetic remark from a beloved friend at one of the most eligible of the missionary stations. "We have no doubt," he writes, "but our friends at home have pleasant meetings still, but we do not enjoy them; they have their praying circles, but we meet not with them. They sit under the droppings of the sanctuary, but there are no such droppings here. If their hearts are frozen, they melt the ice at each other's fires; but if our hearts are cold, every thing around us is colder still; if our fires go out, there is no spark near us by which they can be rekindled."

The missionary of the cross finds discouragements also, from the unwillingness of the heathen to attend to his instructions, from their insensibility, from their captiousness, their prejudices, their vices. He is sometimes ready to exclaim, "I have made all these sacrifices, sustained all these privations, and endured all these toils, apparently in vain." And what can animate his drooping spirits, and raise him from his depression amidst all these discouragements, but the presence, and support, and grace of Jesus Christ? It is this alone which sustains him, inspires him with

courage, and leads him onward to toils and privations still greater, and more self-denying.

The promise in the text will be seen to be of great importance to the Christian missionary,

III. As it respects his LABORS.

He goes forth to cultivate a vast field, to subdue a rugged soil, and to fertilise with the waters of salvation a trackless desart. He has engaged in the greatest enterprise, which ever excited the energies, or exhausted the benevolence of man. He has assigned him not one, but many departments of labor. He goes out into a mental and moral chaos, where he has every thing to form, and mould, and shape. He must enlighten, and civilise, and evangelise. He must teach men to think, to investigate, to reason, to judge. He must arouse the most torpid mind, pour light into the darkest understanding, superinduce a feeling conscience, and reach and probe the heart. He must know how to direct his labors in the best manner, how to employ his time, and spend his strength to the greatest effect, how to make his efforts tell in bringing perishing pagans to know and embrace the Saviour. He must be able to seize the most favorable opportunities, to turn to the best account passing events, and peculiar circumstances, to disarm opposition, and to find the readiest access to the consciences and hearts of the heathen. He must be unremitting in his labors, "instant in season and out of season, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

His scene of labor is new and untried; and his task is to fell the forest, and clear the soil, and break up the ground, and cast in the seed, and nurture the plants, and turn the wilderness into a fruitful field. And amidst all his various, arduous, exhausting labors, to accomplish a work so great, what could he do,—what could he have courage to attempt, without the wisdom and aid of the Lord Jesus Christ? If the Christian minister is ready to exclaim in view of the multiplicity, the magnitude, the importance of his labors, "Who is sufficient for these things;" must not the missionary of the cross under the pressure of his more numerous and painful labors in an unaccustomed clime, amidst the discouragements of a pagan community, amidst the privations and hardships, which are unavoidable, and sometimes almost insupportable, faint ere it is noon, and yield to despondence, without the presence and consolation of the Saviour?

In this enterprise of incessant toil, talk not of human fortitude, and perseverance, and industry. This is not an enterprise, in which the springs of mere worldly fortitude and ardor are touched, and made the springs of action. Men may endure much to discover a new world, to conquer a kingdom, or to build up a nation, because here are motives to awaken ambition. But the missionaries of the cross go forth to a work of more noble daring, which requires greater fortitude and perseverance to accomplish; and they are forbidden by their heavenly King to be influenced by motives of ambition, of earthly fame or glory. They go far hence to the heathen to

discover and make known their moral degradation and wretchedness; to conquer their worst enemies, their wicked hearts; and to build up a kingdom, not applauded by the world; a kingdom which consists "not in meats and drinks, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." And without the promised presence of Jesus Christ, will they be able to sustain their labors; will they persevere in their work; will they accomplish their enterprise?

This leads me to remark once more, that this promise of Jesus Christ will be seen to be of great importance to the Christian missionary,

IV. As it respects his SUCCESS.

The efforts of Christians under the most favorable circumstances, depend on the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ for their salutary results. Christian ministers with the most promising materials, and the most efficient auxiliaries, often labor in the best cultivated fields a considerable time with very little apparent success. And they are wholly unable, amidst the best advantages, to give a saving influence to their ministry. They are assured that the treasure of the gospel is committed to earthen vessels, who, instead of imparting to others the graces of the Spirit, cannot fill themselves, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of them.

What hope then can the missionary have amidst the more numerous obstacles to success, without the promised blessing of Jesus Christ? Follow him to the field of his labor, and behold the unpromising materials from which he is to collect and form a

spiritual temple. See what prejudices he must remove, what darkness dissipate, what idolatries destroy, what darling vices extirpate, what slumbering consciences arouse? Consider how many unwelcome, self-condemning truths must be communicated to the understanding, and carried home to the heart; how a false and degrading system of superstition and crime must be torn away, new objects of worship and love presented, new habits of thinking and feeling formed, new hearts, and new lives produced. In accomplishing all this what can the humble missionary do to ensure success? Who would undertake such a work depending on himself? Would the most highly gifted minister among us? Would the most devoted messenger to the heathen, who has worn out his life in missionary labors, and seen the inefficiency of human instrumentality? Would Swartz? Would Martyn? Would Brainerd? Would Paul? Would an angel? Would Gabriel?

"I have planted, Apollos watered; but *God gave* the increase. Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the *Lord gave* to every man?" Such was the language of Paul. And what could the wandering, solitary missionary do in a land of pagan darkness, where vice had grown into gigantic size and strength; where the idolatries of many generations were as firmly established, as superstition and depravity could establish them; where all is a region of death, and the bones are bleached and dry? O what could a feeble, solitary missionary do;—what could a host of missionaries do, in circumstances like these? Could they

chase away the darkness of ages? Could they break down these systems of superstition, interwoven with almost every habit of social life? Could they raise these stupid souls, twice dead, and convert such a gloomy desert into a land of cheerfulness and plenty? Could they change the heart of one besotted pagan? No, brethren, if they could work miracles they could not do it. Paul could work miracles, but he could not convert the heathen. And the Christian missionary, without the promise of Jesus Christ annexed to the commission under which he goes forth, could have no success. How important, how precious then, is the promise in our text to the missionary of the cross? How important, as it respects his qualifications, his peculiar circumstances, his arduous labors, and his ultimate success?

In the review of our subject we learn *where missionaries abroad, and where the churches at home, should place their dependance.*

It must rest on the promised presence and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Without him they can do nothing. Without his aid and grace missionaries can accomplish nothing important in their work. Without his aid it is a work too great for an angel, for myriads of angels to accomplish.

The missionary of the cross, then, must place all his dependance on the wisdom, and power, and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, under whose commission he holds his high and sacred office. And no one is qualified to assume this office, however eminent his talents, and correct his morals, and invincible his

fortitude, and extensive his learning, who does not know in his own experience the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and who cannot place unshaken confidence in his presence and assistance. Nothing short of this qualifies him for his office. He must take hold of the promise in the text, or in the day of trial he will sink into despondency, or abandon his work. He must secure the approbation and presence of Jesus Christ, or he goes forth depending on himself, unqualified for his enterprise, and in vain. On the promise of the Lord of missions he may confidently rely; then he may expect the presence, and direction, and blessing of his divine Master; and then he "can do all things through Christ strengthening him."

The churches at home, who send forth the missionaries of the cross, must place their dependance on the same presence and aid of the Lord of missions. They ought not, and they do not expect even the most able, faithful missionaries to convert the heathen, or ensure any valuable success to their labors, without the interposition of Him, who is exalted to give repentance and remission of sins. And because they confide in this promise, they pray the Lord of the harvest, not only to raise up, and qualify more laborers, but to guide and succeed those, who are now enduring the heat and burden of the day. It is with dependance on this promise, that they assemble on the first Monday in every month, to pray for the blessing of God upon the efforts of missionaries. Nor do they wonder, that those, who believe this promise *ceased* with the Jewish dispensation, do not send missionaries to the heathen. Why should they? For if this promise is annull-

ed, if this source of dependance has failed,—what could missionaries accomplish, or expect to accomplish, in heathen lands?

If this promise is repealed, the commission, to which it is annexed, is annulled also; and missionaries abroad, and ministers at home, must assume their office, and go forth to their work, without any commission or authority in the word of God. But evangelical churches, who send missionaries to the heathen, and the missionaries themselves, and the conductors of missions, have not so learned Christ. They believe his promise; they believe he is with his faithful ministers and missionaries alway, even to the end of the world.—And *here* they must fasten their dependance; they must plead this promise fervently in prayer; and in its fulfilment they must hope for success. And if their dependance is placed here, they will not be disappointed. Ultimate success is then as sure, as the promise and oath of God.

Our subject also *furnishes the highest encouragement to faithful missionaries, and to all the friends of missions.*

I say, the highest encouragement; for what greater encouragement in this enterprise could they have? They have secured to them by promise, the wisdom, and power, and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is "God over all, blessed forever." The Universe is his storehouse of means for the fulfilment of this promise, and for the accomplishment of their enterprise.

In the commission preceding this promise we see the origin of Christian missions to the heathen; for the

first preachers of the gospel were not settled ministers at home; living amidst all the luxury, and learning, and splendor, and fashion of the age. They were commissioned to *go into all lands, to "teach all nations, to preach the gospel to every creature."* Christian missions among the heathen, then, are not an invention of modern times. They were as truly instituted by Jesus Christ, as the Christian ministry at home. Nay, they are more literally an obedience to the commission given to the first preachers of the gospel, and more nearly an imitation of the example and labors of the Apostles.

It is not, therefore, a mere question of expediency, or of policy, whether we shall send missionaries, and the gospel of the grace of God, to perishing pagans. Christian missions are, by the explicit command of Jesus Christ, as binding upon the Christian world, as the support of the ministry at home. And this is the divinely appointed way, in which benighted nations have been enlightened and evangelised, and in which they will be in all future time. The angel, who has the everlasting gospel to preach to all nations, must commence his flight; the missionaries of the cross must be sent every where to employ the appointed means for the renovation of man, confiding in the promise of Jesus Christ; and then the world will be converted, the millennium introduced, and the glory of the Lord fill the earth, as the waters do the seas.

The Christian world, and even Christians in this country, may hasten the millennium; not by praying formally and heartlessly every day, "thy kingdom

come," while they do little or nothing to advance this kingdom at home or abroad, as though it was to be extended over the earth by miracles, a way in which it never gained a loyal subject;—but by multiplying the means of its advancement, by sending forth the gospel with its publishers into all the earth, and by pleading fervently, and in faith, the irrepealable promise of the Lord of Missions.

Christian missionaries have also the highest encouragement to preach the *gospel*, as the grand means of evangelising the heathen. They are as really commanded *what* means to employ for the conversion of benighted pagans, as to employ any means whatever. It is a part of their commission, "Teach all nations—*whatsoever I have commanded you*,—preach *the gospel* to every creature." It is not to be a question then, whether it is to be their great object to introduce the philosophy and sciences of Christian nations. Their great business is to make known "the gospel of the grace of God." This is the instrumentality by which the world is to be evangelised and saved. It is the sword of the Spirit unsheathed, and skilfully and prayerfully wielded, accompanied with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, which is to demolish the empire of darkness in pagan lands. And the kingdom of Jesus Christ can be extended over the earth by no other instrumentality, and by no other agency.

Christian missionaries may indeed find it their duty, and they undoubtedly will, to promote useful knowledge, the means of civilisation, and all useful institutions; and to encourage intellectual and physical

improvement;—but all this must be done as auxiliary to their great work, that of making known the gospel of Christ. Their great business is to evangelise and save; and this is to be done by proclaiming evangelical truth, and the way of salvation. And missionaries have great encouragement to go forth and preach the gospel every where, because it is the divinely appointed means of attaining their high object; and the means which Jesus Christ hath promised to bless.

The missionaries of the cross, and the friends of missions, may also find great encouragement in their enterprise, from the increasing facilities of raising up missionaries, and obtaining the means of sending them forth, from the increasing facilities of conveying them to all parts of the earth, and communicating with them in all their different locations; from the increasing facilities of acquiring languages, from the progress of knowledge, from the march of freedom, from the providences of God, and from the prophecies of his word.

But the highest encouragement is still found in the promise contained in our text. However dark the immediate prospect of the missionary at any period, however circumstances may change, this encouragement never changes, this promise never fails.

And it is with humble reliance on this promise, my dearly beloved brethren, who are this day to be invested with the high and sacred office of missionaries to the heathen, that we consecrate you to your work. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, who are only the Agents of the Christian community, to distribute their charities, and to send

forth their missionaries, would not call you to this arduous and self-denying work, did they not believe both the commission and the promise, given to the first Christian missionaries, are still in force.

Were we not encouraged by this promise, and were not our confidence placed here, we should have no hope you would ever enlighten, or convert a single pagan. To send you away from all the endearments and privileges of your homes, from your circles of beloved friends, from the bosom of these churches, and from the altars of these sanctuaries, to sustain the privations and hardships of a missionary life, we should think a wanton sacrifice. We would dismiss you to other labors, and call home our missionaries now in the field, and abandon the enterprise, as well, as the hope, of ever evangelising the world.

But the commission and the promise are unrepealed, and remain in all their force. Yes, dear brethren, for your encouragement, as well as ours, the promise has been fulfilled, and fulfilled in the sense, in which we understand it. Not only to the primitive disciples was this promise executed, but it has as really been fulfilled since the ascension of the Saviour, and the close of the Jewish dispensation, as before. It has been fulfilled in our day. Jesus Christ has been with the missionaries sent from the American churches, and has granted them the guidance and support and grace implied in the promise. They have been qualified by his Spirit, sustained in great afflictions by his loving kindness, succeeded in their labors by his grace, and supported and consoled in a dying hour by his presence and smiles. Some indeed

have been cut down long before they had accomplished all, that it was in their heart to do. The beloved Warren, Newell, Nichols, Richards, Mosely, Parsons, Frost, and Fisk, all of precious memory, have been summoned away in the midst of their toils; and we doubt not, are now rejoicing before the throne in the fruit and reward of their sacrifices. They found the sure fulfilment of this precious promise even to the end; they died in the triumphs of faith; and it would be worth making all their sacrifices, and enduring all their toils, to die in the same joyful and triumphant manner.

But the mention of Fisk, that beloved missionary of high qualifications, so generally known and esteemed in our churches, so tenderly associated with all that is useful, and elevating, and endearing in the cause of missions, seems to cast a gloom over the horizon; for a bright star has early set in the eastern hemisphere. God grant that the brightness, with which it set, may cast abroad a clearer light, and accomplish more good, than the revolutions of many future years. That dying missionary could say, confiding in the precious promise of Jesus Christ,—"To be where thou art, to see thee as thou art, to be made like thee, the last sinful motion forever past,—that's Heaven."

You may go forth, beloved brethren, trusting in the promise of the same Saviour, who furnished him with such eminent qualifications, and was with him to the end. One of your number, at least, is expected to go directly to the same interesting field of labor. As he follows the footsteps of this much lamented

missionary, and sees the traces of his benevolence, and piety, and usefulness, may he imbibe much of his spirit, and live, and labor like him, only many, many more years. Go forth, dear brethren, trusting confidently in the precious promise of the Lord of missions. Go forth in his name,—from pure, ardent love to him, and to the souls for whom he died, and he will go with you. Labor and pray among the heathen in the exercise of this spirit, and he will be with you. He will aid you in making still higher intellectual and spiritual attainments; he will support you under trials, succor you in temptation, sustain you amidst all your arduous labors, and crown them with ultimate success. Always remember that he will be present; and always secure his *gracious* presence. He can do as much for you, as though his bodily presence went with you. And would you feel encouraged, were he visibly present with you, as with his disciples, when he tabernacled in flesh, that you might seek his wisdom to illumine your minds, his counsel to guide your way, his mercy to support you, his grace to give you success, and his power to defend and protect you? You may as really have his presence to do all this, as did his disciples, when he sojourned with them on the earth. You may repair to him as frequently and freely, you may ask as much, and expect as much, and receive as much, as though he should go forth in his bodily presence with you, from this day till the hour of your death. Let this be your encouragement, your hope, your confidence at all times.

And to you also, my beloved brother,* who are devoted to the same great and glorious enterprise of evangelising all nations, but in a different sphere, this promise of our Lord Jesus affords animating encouragement. To you, in connexion with your respected associates, the churches look with high expectation; and upon you, and them, they have devolved vast responsibilities and mighty cares. By the presence and grace of the Saviour, therefore, you must be sustained, or you will sink into discouragement, and an early grave. But upon this assurance, you, no less than he who spends his days in distant, benighted climes, may confidently rest; and resting upon it, may find support and joy amid all your painful toils. Then keep near to the Saviour; lean on his bosom, and confide in his faithfulness, and you need not fear.

Finally, dearly beloved brethren, trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, maintain constant and intimate communion with him; labor only to do his will; tread in his footsteps; seek the conversion of the heathen, that he may see the travail of his soul and be satisfied;—and you will be able to bear witness, as you ascend upward from the ashes of this world, as you stand at his tribunal, and as you sit on a throne of glory, that he has fulfilled *to you* his promise, Lo, I AM WITH YOU ALWAY, EVEN TO THE END OF THE WORLD.

* It may be proper here to say, that Mr. Anderson, to whom this was addressed, is the Assistant Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions.

THE

CHARGE,

BY THE REV. ISAAC KNAPP,

OF WESTFIELD, MASS.

Dear Brethren,

The office, which has now been committed to you, by prayer, and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, involves the most sacred duties, and the most solemn responsibilities. The glorious Redeemer, who has purchased the church with his own most precious blood, has constituted you messengers of the Lord of Hosts, and heralds of mercy, to a world lying in sin. The office which you have received, attaches to it consequences, which will extend to the judgment of the great day, and reach through interminable ages. We doubt not, but the work to which you have now been separated, has been the subject of your serious consideration and earnest prayer. You have contemplated its arduous and difficult duties, and we trust have looked forward to that day, when you must give an account of your stewardship. Still, on this occasion, which, to us, and to you, is most deeply interesting, we feel ourselves bound, as an Ecclesiastical Council, to present afresh to your minds, some of the duties of the Christian ministry, and to exhort you faithfully to perform them.

Though the work to which you are called, is, in many respects different from that of stated pastors, yet we believe that the exhortation of the inspired apostle is applicable to you, no less than to us; and, in language dictated by the Spirit of inspiration,

we do, therefore, "Charge you, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine." That you may be enabled rightly to preach the word, give yourselves to study, meditation and prayer. Labor to furnish your minds with all that knowledge, which your peculiar circumstances shall render necessary; but especially with a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. Let that sacred volume be the subject of your prayerful meditation. Unfold its sublime and heavenly doctrines, and urge on the consciences of men its pure and holy precepts. Exhibit the tremendous sanctions, and the consoling and precious promises, of the gospel. Proclaim that suffering, and that glorified Saviour, of whom prophets and apostles spake; proclaim him, in the infinite excellence of his character, in the glory of his divine perfections. Preach those doctrines, which stain the pride of human glory, and which lead depraved and rebellious men to hope for pardon only through the rich mercy of God in a bleeding Saviour; and for sanctification only through the operations of the Holy Ghost.

The work, to which you are called, is in many respects peculiarly arduous and difficult, and though we have confidence in you, yet we feel, dear Brethren, that, with peculiar propriety, we may charge you, in the name of the Great Head of the church, Take heed to yourselves. The ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ must love him. Those who go forth to publish terms of reconciliation, must themselves be reconciled to God. When far from your dear country and friends, surrounded by heathen, or the worshippers of Mahomet, enduring privations, and worn down with labors and cares, cheerless will be your state, unless sustained by the love of Christ, glowing in your hearts. And without this, you will not be likely to maintain that sacred character, which will honor the office with which you are invested. Take heed, then, to yourselves; and let all your conduct testify, that you believe and love the holy doctrines and precepts which you teach.

Take heed also to the ministry. Receive the word at God's mouth. Let not the doctrines you teach be corrupted, by the theories and speculations of any modern metaphysicians, nor by

the more flattering and more fatal theories of those, who would pluck the crown from Emmanuel's head, and degrade the Lord our Righteousness to the rank of a fallible man.

We charge you to admister the ordinances of the Gospel. To the professed friends and followers of Christ, dispense the memorials of his body and blood; and baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. When called to invest others with the same sacred office, which you now sustain, lay hands suddenly on no man. The things which ye have now received, commit to faithful men, that they may teach others also.

Dear Brethren, you are not only ministers of the Gospel, but are destined, in the providence of God, to a peculiar work. Your labors are to be directed to the immediate benefit of those, who are in the dark parts of the earth, degraded with ignorance, and debased with sin. The Board of Commissioners, under whose immediate direction you act, will address to you those instructions which are specially applicable to your respective circumstances. The wisdom and experience of that Board entitle them to the confidence of the Christian public, and their persevering exertions to diffuse, as extensively as in their power, the blessings of the gospel, demand our gratitude. To their more special instructions, we therefore commend you. But to us, as a Council, it pertains to impress, if possible, very deeply on your minds, that the great work to which you are called, the work to which every thing you do should be subservient, is to publish the gospel; the pure gospel, in its glorious simplicity; those precious doctrines of the cross, by which men are sanctified and saved. In connection with this, much is to be done in imparting the rudiments of literary instruction, and to this no small share of your labor will probably be directed. But wherever you may go, and with whatever nation or tribe of idolaters you may fix your residence, whether among heathen, or Jews, or the worshippers of the Beast, or of the False Prophet; we charge you to resolve, as Paul the Missionary did, to know nothing among them but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Think not of gaining loyal subjects to the King of Zion, and spreading the triumphs of the cross, by accommodating the gospel to the feelings, and mixing it with the superstitions, of men. The

simple gospel is the instrument which God has appointed to elevate the character of man on earth, and to bring him to mansions of eternal glory. This is the instrument, which God has appointed, for pulling down the strong holds of sin, and bringing into subjection every thought to the obedience of Christ. It is this, which has civilized the Hottentot, tamed the savage, made the fruits of righteousness to grow on the dreary coasts of Greenland, and on the islands of the western ocean.

To one of you, although, with the others, devoted to the missionary work, an important station is, for the present, assigned in our own country, as an officer, and an agent of the Board. You cannot expect, Sir, that we, as a Council, should so minutely understand the duties to which you are called, as to render it suitable for us to address to you specific instructions. We cannot, however, but know, that the duties devolving on you, are arduous, and perplexing, and of high importance. The disposition in the Christian community to support missions, and the success of missionary operations, must, under God, depend much on the wisdom and fidelity of those, who superintend and direct them. On this day of your consecration to the work of the ministry, we charge you, that, in all your correspondence, in all your business at the Missionary Rooms, where so many of the friends of missions call, in all your journeys on the business of the Board, and in all your intercourse with men, you set the Lord before you; look to Him for wisdom to guide you, and exhibit the character of a meek, and faithful, and devoted minister of Christ.

To you, dear Brethren, who are about to depart to the distant shores of India and Palestine, and to us who are called to act on this solemn occasion, the thought is an affecting one, that we shall probably see each other's faces no more. We say again to you, take heed to yourselves, and to the ministry which you have now received, that ye fulfil it. Devote your souls and bodies, and all your faculties, to the Lord Jesus. How consoling is his promise, *Lo, I am with you alway.* The circumstances of your life and death are at his disposal. If to his infinite wisdom it seem best, you will be sustained in hardships, and defended in

dangers, and rejoice for many years in beholding the fruit of your labors, in turning men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. And if, in his mysterious providence, you should, like Martyn, and Parsons, and Fisk, and Richards, and others, at an early age be removed from this world of trial and toil, he can soften your dying pillow, and make death your gain.

To the great Lord of Missions, who has commanded us to preach his gospel to every creature; to the exalted Redeemer, who is made Head over all things to the church, we commit you. May his providence direct you, his grace sustain you, and his blessing attend you. Be faithful unto death, and he will give you a crown of life. *Amen.*

THE

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP,

BY REV. L. IVES HOADLEY,

OF WORCESTER, MASS.

TO MR. ANDERSON.

In discharging the duty assigned me on this occasion, I would first address myself to you, my Brother, Assistant Secretary of the American Board. You present yourself, dear Brother, with these other Brethren, and request ordination. You are not expecting, in your present circumstances, to go as a Missionary to the Heathen; nor to be an Evangelist, in the same sense that most are, who are ordained under that name. The Council, however, think your reasons for wishing ordination sufficient. They think your ordination will facilitate your discharge of official duty in your present station, and increase your general usefulness in the church. They have, therefore, proceeded to set you apart to the sacred work of the Christian Ministry; and, in behalf of the Council, I ask you to accept the RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

And, in giving you this right hand, dear Brother, let me assure you of the deep interest which we, and the whole Christian community, feel in the success of the sacred enterprise before you, as an officer of the American Board. Your cause is their cause; and I may assure you, on this occasion, not only of the prayers and sympathies of this ordaining Council, but of the whole Church in general. What she has done already, and what she is still doing, is but a pledge of what she will continue

to do. Indeed, we hope and trust it is not too much to say, she will do more and more—that her ability and disposition and exertions in behalf of the Heathen, will increase and multiply, till, with the labors of brethren from other countries also, the whole world shall be brought to the obedience of Christ.

With this prospect in view, we give you this token of Christian affection for ourselves, and our churches. As an Evangelist we wish you success in all the opportunities you may have of discharging the functions of the ministry; and as an officer of the Board also, we commend you, in all your arduous labors, to the Great Head of the Church.

TO THE MISSIONARIES.

I NOW turn to you, dear Brethren. You, too, have been consecrated to Christ, and set apart to the work of the Christian ministry by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery; and you too have been charged with the embassy of our Saviour's love to perishing men. How responsible, dear Brethren, as well as honorable, the work!

We could welcome you, as fellow laborers in the harvest here at home. Your aid is greatly needed. As personal friends to some, and dearly beloved, you have been expected in the vineyard with many fond anticipations, and the day when you should be duly invested with the sacred office, has been waited for with not a little interest. It has been a luminous, cheering point in the prospect of Christians, as their thoughts have dwelt upon you.

But man is selfish, and human foresight blind. The occasion calls me to welcome you not to labors in your native country, among relations who love you, but to the work of Christian Missions, beyond the deep. In the name of this Ecclesiastical Council, convened by letters missive from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, I give you the RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP TO GO UNTO THE HEATHEN.

Your continued acquaintance here, your friendship and occasional company, your counsel and mingled sympathy as changing scenes may rise, have no doubt been calculated upon by affectionate kindred. But are we in consequence to be embar-

rassed in giving you our congratulations on this occasion? No, Brethren, not at all. We would not doubt the voice of every friend you have is, 'Go, and the blessing of heaven attend you.' Particularly let me assure you of the sympathy and regard of this ordaining Council, and of the Christian public in general. Not forgetting the pledge of the Church, as just alluded to in what was said to our brother, the Assistant Secretary, accept this Right Hand of our cordial approbation and endeared affection. We have fellowship, dear Brethren, in the sentiments we believe you entertain on our holy religion, and in your desires of good to the dying nations. We trust you go to carry the pure gospel of our Lord. In your prosperity we shall rejoice. Trials also you will meet, and in these we pledge our remembrance of you at the throne of Almighty Grace.

You go, Brethren, some here and some there, and all to fill the ranks, and augment the force, where death has displaced his victims, and one lately; but be not discouraged, nor disheartened. The Captain of our salvation lives. He is destined to prevail. And whether you go where an ancient and imposing mythology has lowered for ages in doleful superstitions, or where, though the abomination of the false Prophet prevails with many, some few rays of the Sun of Righteousness still remain to cheer the gloom,—our prayer is, and it shall be, that you may soon and long preach the blessed gospel of our Lord in different languages, to different nations.

We know there will be difficulties, but these you will surmount: there will be labor and fatigue, but you will be strengthened from on High. Christ will be with you. And when far away from native home, and kindred dear, you shall at length be called to die, there, like Newell, and Nichols, and Frost, or like Parsons, and Fisk, you shall find the soft hand of his love soothing your distresses, and inviting you to rest. Go, dear Brethren, and the God of Peace be with you. *Amen.*